1895.

THE

ANNUAL REPORTS

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

AND OF THE

Sanitary Inspector

FOR THE

PAIGNTON URBAN DISTRICT.

PAIGNTON :

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THE ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR 1895.

To the Chairman and Councillors

of the Paignton Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

In presenting this my Fifth Annual Report, I am again able to congratulate you on the continued healthiness and prosperity of your town. I have, however, to regret that friction has arisen between the Council and its Health Officers as to the carrying out of the provisions of the Public Health Acts and the Bye-laws of the town. Seeing that the future prosperity of Paignton depends chiefly upon its repute as a Health Resort, I would remind the Council of the bad policy of shirking in the least their plain duty of enforcing to the uttermost extent the provisions and powers entrusted to them.

Sewers.

The provision of Relief Sewers for carrying off the surface water is progressing very slowly, and should be pushed on more rapidly.

Preston

The Drainage of Preston is not yet commenced, and I would again ask you to consider seriously the desirability of proceeding at once with this work. If not commenced forthwith, the summer will be upon us before the work can be completed ; and as powers to borrow the money to do the work have been obtained, there is no reasonable excuse for delay.

Water.

The new Reservoir is now completed, and with this additional storage an abundant supply of good water is available. A systematic inspection of the town is now desirable, and Town Water should be taken into every dwelling-house for sanitary purposes. The numerous wells in the town should be examined, and, where found polluted, should be closed. In all cases where any kind of food is sold to the public, and water used in its preparation, the use of Town Water should be compulsory.

Isolation Hospital.

The plan for the Isolation Hospital has been provisionally approved by the Local Government Board, and this work should be commenced as early as possible, so that the Hospital may be available next autumn.

Private Roads.

In my report of last year I drew your attention to the unsatisfactory condition of many of the Private Roads, both front and back. The principle of taking over of back roads has been accepted by the taking over of back Victoria Street, and I trust the Council will not stop at this one, but during the present year put in force the Private Streets Act, and take over many, if not all the back roads in the town. My reason for pushing this is that no private road, back or front, is ever scavenged, with the result that the roads are dirty, and in some cases dangerous.

Deaths.

During the year the total number of deaths registered was 105—males 45, females 60—giving an annual death rate of 14.2 per 1000. The following table shews the number of deaths at the various ages :—

Under 1 year of age	17
1 year and under 5	18
5 ,, ,, 15	2
15 ,, ,, 25	4
25 ,, ,, 65	19
65 ,, and upwards	45
	105

Of the 45 deaths 21 were over 70 and 16 over 80 years of age.

The following is a summary of the causes of death registered during the year :—

Measles	7
Phthisis	9
Diseases of the organs of respiration	24
Diseases of the organs of circulation	6
Influenza	1
Injuries	2
Other diseases	56
	105

The deaths from Phthisis were 9, giving a death rate of 1·2 per 1,000 per annum, and exactly the same as last year.

The Zymotic death rate is 0·95 per 1,000 per annum, and due alone to Measles.

The infant mortality is 17, and measured by the proportion of one year of age and under to the number of births registered is 102·4 per 1,000. It is satisfactory to be able to state that this is a lower mortality rate than last year.

Zymotic Disease.

In common with many towns in Devon, Paignton suffered from an epidemic of Measles in April last, and the deaths registered as due to it were 7. It is seven years since any death was registered as due to measles, and as a consequence there was a large proportion of children susceptible. The epidemic ran its course very rapidly, and the weather being warm few complications occurred. Measles not being notifiable, no exact record of the number of cases can be ascertained. The following notifications were received during the year, viz. :—

16	cases of	Scarlet Fever.
2	,,	Diphtheria.
1	,,	Typhoid.
5	,,	Erysipelas.
1	,,	Croup.
1	,,	Puerperal Fever.

No death was registered as due to any infectious disease other than Measles. The case of Typhoid occurred in a visitor ; but no unsanitary condition was found in or about the house. With the exception of Measles, all the cases of

infectious disease were notified during the last quarter of the year. Every effort was made to prevent spreading, but as no Isolation Hospital was available Scarlet Fever spread through four households. All the children in the houses were forbidden to attend school, and I have not been able to trace any case to infection at school. In one of the cases the first attack was one imported from a neighbouring town, and spread through the household, resulting in five cases. In each house, when the cases were at an end, the Sanitary Officer disinfected the premises, and a thorough cleansing was insisted upon. The cases of Erysipelas seem to recur in one neighbourhood, viz., St. Michael's. This I attribute to the dirty condition of the back yards and private back road. In some parts of this neighbourhood stables are too near the dwelling-house, as the yard at the back is altogether too small for such use.

Vaccination.

Vaccination is carefully looked after, and the following particulars are supplied by the Vaccination Officer :—

Total number of births 166.

Successfully Vaccinated	128
Postponed by Medical Certificate	5
Certified as unsusceptible	2
Died Unvaccinated	10
Left the town	1
Unvaccinated in addition to those postponed	20
	166

Of the 20 unvaccinated, 15 are under 3 months old. One successful prosecution has taken place for noncompliance with the Vaccination Act. With regard to the two cases certified as unsusceptible, I would remark that this number is out of all proportion to general experience, and would advise "try again."

Many matters not touched upon in my report will be dealt with in the report of Mr. Crathorn, the Sanitary Inspector.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

C. W. VICKERS, M.O.H

THE FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SANITARY INSPECTOR

FOR THE YEAR 1895.

To the Urban District Council of Paignton.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

In submitting to you my First Annual Report, I wish to call your attention to the fact that this report only covers from March to December, 1895, or about nine months. Up to the present time I have been carrying out the routine duties of my office, and making myself generally acquainted with the district. I have not as yet commenced any house to house inspection, but hope during the present year, with your permission and time permitting, to commence to do so.

I here submit to you a tabular statement of some of the works carried out during the year :—

Complaints received	50
Houses inspected	250
Preliminary notices issued	36
Legal ,, ,, ...	37
Houses cleaned and whitewashed	3
,, disinfected	3
New Intercepters in place of defective Mason's traps	10

House drains choked, remedied	20
,, defective, made good	44
,, tested with smoke test	44
New water-waste preventers fixed	13
,, water closets in place of pan and container	12
,, ,, ,, long hopper ...	8
Soil-pipes found defective and repaired ...	10
New soil-pipes fixed outside in place of defective ones in house wall	18
Stoneware gullies in place of defective bell and D traps	58
Ashpits repaired	10
New galvanised iron receptacles provided ...	14
Overflow and rain-water pipes taken from drain	20
Removals of offensive accumulations	10
Notices to remove animals	4
New water supply laid to houses	9
Wells closed	3
Covers put to water tanks	10
Closet supplies cut off from drinking water tank	6
New water closets provided	8
Drains taken up and relaid	7
Overcrowding in house	1
New houses examined and drains tested ...	58
Hotel	1
Samples of milk taken for Analyst	9
,, water ,, ...	2
Cases of infectious disease visited and disinfectants supplied	26
Letters and reports	80

Legal notices, 37 have been served under the Public Health Acts. Only one prosecution has taken place for refusing the Inspector admission to premises; this failed, although in other towns, under similar circumstances, a conviction was obtained.

Houses, 42 have been tested, and in all cases, if found defective, the necessary alterations have been carried out. Although every facility is offered by the Council to the public to enable them to make sure their drains are in good condition, I regret to state that few people avail themselves of this opportunity. I would suggest to all persons who let apartments the necessity of having their drains tested annually, for no doubt in the very near future most persons visiting Health Resorts will require some proof that the houses are in a good sanitary condition.

New closets, 12 in place of pan and container, and 8 new pans in place of long hopper, also 18 new soil pipes have been fitted outside in place of being concealed in the house wall. I would advise householders in general that so long as they allow these pan container closets in the house and defective soil pipes in the wall they run very serious risk of injuring their health.

The owners of nine houses have been served with notice to take in town water, and have complied with the same. I find many houses have no water on the premises, and I consider it very necessary that all owners of such houses should be compelled to provide a supply.

In 6 cases the water was being supplied to the water closets direct from the drinking water cistern. This is a most dangerous practice, and householders would do well to have the W.C. supply examined in all cases where a water-waste preventer is not in use. The importance of the frequent cleansing of drinking water cisterns also needs to be brought prominently forward. The public generally seems utterly to fail to realise the great facilities for pollution of water which are afforded by the cisterns, which I am sorry to say are, in many instances, fixed in such positions that it is impossible to clean them.

Under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act I have taken 9 samples of milk and sent to the Public Analyst. One was adulterated with 20% of added water, and only 3 were found to be of good quality. I consider this very unsatisfactory.

New houses, 58 have been examined and the drains tested. In 54 cases I have had stoneware intercepters put in place of the Mason's trap, and would recommend that in the drainage of all houses over £10 per annum an inspection chamber be fixed near the intercepter trap.

I have made several visits to all the dairies and cow-houses registered. The former are kept in fairly good condition, but the majority of the latter are in bad condition, owing, in many instances, to the dilapidated state of the buildings. I have reason to believe that persons are selling milk who are not on the register, and would suggest that a public notice be issued requiring such persons to apply for registration.

I have regularly visited the bakehouses, which are kept in clean condition. Several are underground, and these are now considered to be in an unhealthy position. The law now is that no bakehouse shall be allowed underground which is not in use as such at the present time.

During part of the year the scavenging of the ashpits has been carried out by contract in a fairly satisfactory manner, but I believe it is a step in the wrong direction, and would, I think, be done more satisfactorily by the Council.

I cannot close my report without thanking, through you, the M.O.H. for the valuable assistance I have received from him, and the kind and courteous way in which he always shows his willingness to give me advice and assistance in the discharge of my duties.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

J. CRATHORN, C.S.I.,

Sanitary Inspector.